PDF Overview -- Software and Guidelines

With the implementation of CM/ECF, one of the major areas of new training will be with respect to Adobe PDF documents. "Adobe" is the company responsible for the immensely popular PDF format, used worldwide for sharing documents of various sizes and sources. "PDF" stands for "portable document format," and it is a special language developed by Adobe that retains virtually all of the document's original appearance. This means that a document saved in PDF format can usually be e-mailed or shared with almost anyone...anywhere.

The benefits of the PDF format are:
- the viewer program is free, so anyone can view the document
- the file size for a PDF is relatively small
- the recipient doesn't have to have the program that originally created the document -- for example, a WordPerfect document can be easily converted to PDF format, then sent to a friend. Your friend doesn't have to have WordPerfect; they can simply open the PDF, using the free viewer (called the "Adobe Reader")

Many major programs these days have the built-in ability to create PDF files, and more programs are jumping on that bandwagon. In this regard, PDF has become the most used "standard" format for document sharing.

So....what CAN'T a PDF file do???

Normally, you cannot edit or modify a PDF file. If you want something changed, then it is usually the responsibility of the person who created the PDF -- they will have to edit the original file, then regenerate a new PDF version. But for CM/ECF, this is actually a **good** thing -- this will help preserve the original document. If we are going to rely on the PDF to be an accurate facsimile of the original, we don't want anyone changing it.

As mentioned earlier, "many" programs have the built-in capability to create PDF files directly, but there are still a few programs that don't have this capability. So, what is the alternative then? You can:

1) purchase the "Adobe PDF Writer" software -- more involved than the "Reader" and it costs about $275 to $300; while this will certainly work, the Acrobat Writer actually has numerous features that the typical user will never need. CM/ECF does not require Acrobat Writer!

2) purchase a 'clone' program -- there are several programs from companies other than Adobe that will add the capability to create PDF's. Most of these programs install "drivers" on your computer -- these drivers will add a pseudo-printer to your computer, and this "printer" actually generates the PDF file. It's not a real printer (hence the "pseudo"), but your Windows programs won't know the difference. If you select this "printer," the result will be a PDF file.
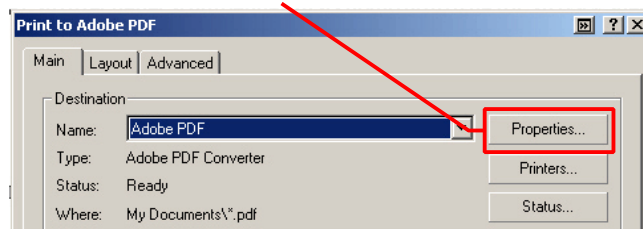
3) use a FREE program! I have personally experimented with several, and the best I've found so far is "PDF995" (www.pdf995.com). You can purchase a version for $9.95 if you want to eliminate its frequent advertisements, but you can still use the free version. I have had great success with PDF995.

Unfortunately, the Courts cannot cover all of the software issues regarding these PDF creation programs, but we can offer general guidelines that should hold true for all packages. Furthermore, the Courts cannot provide training regarding Microsoft Word or other word processors. Our training will be limited to just the very basics of PDF creation.

Preferred PDF Settings for CM/ECF Filings

Regardless of the product chosen to create PDF's, there are various "settings" that must be considered. Some programs have more configuration settings than others -- Adobe Acrobat is used in the following examples, but your software **should** at least contain the following options...somewhere...

    1)   ***Document security*** -- these features must be turned "OFF."
        To check: for Adobe Acrobat 5, look under "File-->Document Security"
                     for Adobe Acrobat 6, look under "Document-->Security"

    2)   ***Embedded fonts*** -- embedding the fonts along with the PDF ensures that it will be viewable in its exact original format when viewed by others. Otherwise, the software may assume (wrongly) that the recipient has the same fonts as the creator (you).
        To check: for Adobe Acrobat (5 or above), prior to printing, look under the "Properties" button. It may be buried, but it's there...

    3)   ***Compression*** -- to be safe, this should be turned "OFF" or set to "ZIP" or "LZW".
        To check: for Acrobat, look under "Properties" again.

    4)   ***Compatibility --*** if your software allows it, set for "**Acrobat 4.0** (or PDF 1.3)"

File Size Limitations

Currently, pleadings will be limited to **5Mb** for our CM/ECF system. Anything larger than that must be divided into separate files -- you can then add them as "attachments" to the main pleading.

If you create PDF's directly from a document in your word processor, the resultant PDF will be **much smaller** than if you scanned it. Scanning documents should be limited to situations when you don't have the original word processor file. Scanning is also necessary for special exhibits (photos, diagrams, etc.). But if at all possible, generate the PDF from within your word processor.

The following offers some "rule of thumb" estimates for file sizes, using *WordPerfect* and *Word*. Keep in mind that more complex documents (colors, gray-shades, graphics, artwork, etc.) will be larger:

        Original document size =   40Kb (about 10 pages)
        Generated PDF size =   30Kb up to 100Kb (Adobe is usually smallest; other packages higher)
        Pages per 5Mb limit =   **500** to **1600+** pages!

If SCANNED (varies considerably -- our tests show a range from 50Kb to 150Kb per page)
        Pages per 5Mb limit =   **50** (using a 100Kb average)
        Photos and other graphics generally require more -- we estimate about **25** photos
        per 5Mb limit.

Recently (June, 2005), we tested several PDF software packages. The following table shows typical file sizes when converting from WordPerfect to PDF. The sample documents were actual court documents, originally created in WordPerfect format. They were then printed, either using WordPerfect's built-in PDF capability or else using the listed third-party software. The programs listed are just a sample of the many PDF creators available (see links below):

document	WP10	WP12	OO*	Adobe 5	Adobe 6	CutePDF	deskPDF	PDF995	PrimoPDF	EasyPDF
9-pg / 34Kb	64	63	101	29	32	49	36	36	109	X
32-pg / 168Kb	144	171	191	67	72	122	163	148	218	X

key: WP10 = WordPerfect 10's built-in "Publish to PDF" option
WP12 = WordPerfect 12's built-in "Publish to PDF" option
OO = OpenOffice, version 1.1.4, using the "Export as PDF" option
[Note: WP documents were converted to "RTF" format, then loaded in OpenOffice]
Adobe 5 = Adobe Acrobat Writer, version 5 -- printing to the "Acrobat PDFWriter" driver
Adobe 6 = Adobe Acrobat Writer, version 6 -- printing to the "Adobe PDF" driver
CutePDF = CutePDF, version 2.3 – printing to the "CutePDF Writer" driver
deskPDF = deskPDF, version 2.11 Professional – printing to the "deskPDF" driver
PDF995 = PDF995, version 7.4s – printing to the "PDF995" driver
PrimoPDF = PrimoPDF (by activePDF) – printing to "PrimoPDF" driver
EasyPDF = ***not recommended!*** PDF's were corrupt (also goes by the name of "WinPDF")

The results above confirm that Adobe products produce the smallest file sizes, but all of the products listed produce reasonably-sized PDF files, suitable for submission to CM/ECF. For these examples (the 9-page and 32-page doc), the quality of the final PDF was very good for all programs. Each program is configurable, which can affect PDF quality and size.

Note that most PDF drivers also tend to <u>adjust</u> the document slightly when creating a PDF. For example, page-breaks may occur at different points than in the original document. For long documents, this may result in more (or less) pages. *To avoid this nuance, select the PDF print driver **<u>before</u>** you start composing the document.*

The packages tested are just a sample of the PDF creation programs available. An Internet search of "PDF creator" will yield dozens of sites. A good place to start is:

http://www.pdfstore.com (then click the *"Create/Convert"* link on their home page)

PDF Store lists over 30 programs, ranging in price from $39 to $3999! There are several products under $100 that should be adequate for CM/ECF filings. These are "sponsored" products, so it is not a comprehensive list. Other sources are:
http://www.pdf995.com (<u>free</u>, or $9.95 to avoid the advertisements)
http://www.primopdf.com (<u>free</u>, but a constant advertisement for 'activePDF')
http://www.docudesk.com (home of "deskPDF" – $29.95)
http://www.cutepdf.com (version 3.0 costs $49.95, but version 2.3 is <u>free</u>)
http://www.pdffactory.com ($49.95 or $99.95 for "Pro" version)